

Mr. President, education really matters. This year, we have the country behind us and several major opportunities to seriously improve American schools to meet American expectations. But it will take a lot of hard work and courage to get there. We need all our school laws to work better for local communities, for our teachers and staff, for parents and families, and most importantly, for our students. We must keep in mind that the students are our real clients and organize our work around their needs and not ours.

We need better flexibility, better accountability, better efficiency and better funding. We need to make some important investments in the nuts and bolts of providing education, class-size reduction, better facilities, better training for teachers and more opportunities for students to be safe and to learn. These investments cost money, and we just need to make it happen.

We also need better leadership and vision and articulation of why we are all working so hard—so that students learn better and faster and have more hope for the future.

As a former school board member, I can tell you that sometimes the decisions are not about money, they are about finding the best way to do things so students can learn. And we need to support those decisions as well.

A great example of this was our superintendent, John Stanford, of the Seattle school district. Superintendent Stanford, who died this year after a heroic battle with cancer, showed people in Seattle and around the Nation just what we can accomplish in our schools by setting the right tone, asking for the best effort possible, and not accepting less. Many adults in a community know the superintendent of their district, but never have I seen so many students, young children who knew that John Stanford was their superintendent and that he wanted desperately and personally for them to succeed and they responded.

You will see elements of all these ideas today that address all of these issues—clear vision, more flexibility, better accountability, increased efficiency and improved funding. You will see here what America is asking for its public schools: We need to set high standards, articulate a vision, and give people the support and backing they need to get the job done. When these bills pass into law, you will see American schools that work better, for better results, for all of our children.

I look forward to working with my colleagues and the American people to take these important steps for better schools across our land. As well, I thank our leader for speaking to legislation that he will introduce shortly on health care reform, retirement security, afterschool programs and more. These are the issues the American public wants us to address and work on,

and I look forward to working with all of my colleagues to meet these challenges. I hope we can make progress this year and make a difference in the quality of life in all of the families in this country. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. BOND addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

Mr. BOND. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. BOND pertaining to the introduction of S. 52 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. DURBIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Iowa, Senator HARKIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I thank the manager.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. HARKIN. I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to Sarah Lister, a fellow on my staff, during the introduction of S. 18.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. HARKIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 18 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the Chair.

STATE OF THE UNION

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition this morning to comment briefly on the President's State of the Union speech and to introduce legislation, since this is the first day of the 106th Congress when legislation may be introduced.

I applaud President Clinton for proceeding with the State of the Union tonight. Some say that Capitol Hill is schizophrenic with impeachment proceedings in the Senate Chamber, and across the Rotunda we will hear the President's State of the Union speech in the House Chamber. But I believe that it is very important that we take care of the Nation's business. I think that can be accomplished at the same time that we move forward with the Senate being constituted as a Court of Impeachment to decide that issue.

I have noted the advance text of the President's statement commenting on education and his desire to set up incentives to be a condition for Federal funding. I chair the Appropriations' Subcommittee on Education and we will proceed very promptly with hearings on that subject to make a deter-

mination, legislatively, as to whether, at least in the view of our subcommittee, those kinds of standards and those kinds of conceptions are appropriate or whether they may constitute too much Federal interference with education which traditionally has been left to the State and local levels. But we are prepared to move right ahead with that legislation, with that consideration.

Noted also from the President's advance text about an intention to deal with the issue of local preparation for responding if—God forbid—there should be weapons of mass destruction unleashed on the American people—again, that is a matter which would come within our Subcommittee on Health. At the same time, there is a commission working on weapons of mass destruction, on legislation which I authored 2 years ago as chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee. John Deutch, former CIA Director, chairs the commission and I serve as vice chairman of the committee.

We are prepared to move ahead with what the President has offered and what the President has to say. I compliment him for moving ahead with that State of the Union speech to take care of the Nation's business. I believe the Congress will cooperate by moving ahead on two tracks—we can have the Court of Impeachment in the Senate Chamber and the State of the Union speech in the House Chamber, and the Rotunda will not be schizophrenic and we can function.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I am introducing three legislative matters, including legislation on health care, which has been a focal point of my attention and my tenure in the Senate, and again for my chairmanship of the Appropriations' Subcommittee on Health. I believe that we can move ahead to cover the 43 million Americans who are now not covered within the existing expenditures of \$1.100 trillion a year. There are ways to economize. There can be an extension of health care by making it easier for small businesses to pool their resources and buy health insurance, by accelerating the date when there will be full deductibility for health care, and there could be very, very substantial savings possible on matters which are specified in the course of this legislation.

ENTERPRISE ZONES IN AMERICA

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I am introducing, along with the distinguished Senator from Illinois, Senator DURBIN, legislation to deal with America's cities. Some are urgently in need of assistance. Our legislation is not to add new funding through appropriations but, instead, to have the General